



EXPLORE
BLOOMINGTON’S TRAILS
BIKING AND HIKING GUIDE
MAKES USING CITY TRAILS EASY

Bloomington has more than 19 miles of paved trails and sidewalks in our City parks. In addition, Bloomington offers miles of on-road bikeways and unpaved trails to explore. To help you find and navigate all these trails and bikeways, the City has created a biking and hiking guide.

The *Active Living Biking and Hiking Guide* maps on-road biking routes, as well as off-road biking and hiking trails, located within the city. This free guide, complete with detailed maps and active living tips, is available on the City’s website. Hard copies are available at the Parks and Recreation counter at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

The creation of the *Active Living Biking and Hiking Guide* was made possible through a grant from the Statewide Health Improvement Program.

For more information, check out the *Alternative Transportation Plan*, also available on the [City’s website](#).

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: **HIKING MAP.**



BACKYARD COMPOSTING
GOOD PRACTICE FOR REDUCING
YOUR WASTE

Backyard composting is an easy way to turn much of the plant waste from your yard into a rich organic material that you can use to improve your soil. The process converts plant materials such as grass clippings and leaves into a usable organic soil amendment or mulch. Gardeners have used compost for centuries to increase soil organic matter, improve soil composition and supply some of the essential nutrients for plant growth.

Incorporating compost into light, sandy soil helps it hold both moisture and nutrients, while adding it to heavy soil improves drainage.

There are many additional benefits associated with composting when done right. To learn best practices, visit the City’s website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: **COMPOST.**

Earth Action Heroes protect the earth. Whether it’s saving energy or guarding Bloomington’s precious natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action...

EARTH ACTION HEROES
MASTER RECYCLERS

Residents Susan Tracy, Lisa Burkhart, Julie Tinberg and Amy Perkins jumped at the chance to be the first Minnesotans to participate in Hennepin County’s Master Recycler Program, a 25-hour education in the art of waste prevention, recycling and composting.

When the women discovered they were all from Bloomington, like any responsible environmentalists, they decided to carpool to the weekly class. After completing their formal training, they vowed to keep in touch.

“We all thought we could do more if we combined our efforts,” Tracy said. “Our goal is to increase recycling and composting, including by residents of apartments and multifamily homes where recycling rates tend to drop.”

What does it take to become a “master” of a skill or body of knowledge? Hard work? Dedication? Passion for the subject matter? According to Tracy, a retired Oak Grove Middle School teacher, to truly call oneself a master in any field requires continuing education and hands-on work. When the women finished their coursework in May, they were required



to commit at least 30 hours during the rest of the year teaching recycling at local schools, businesses, special events

and information booths.

In addition, the women must attend monthly meetings, continue to document their volunteer efforts and reapply through Hennepin County on a yearly basis to retain their titles.

“It’s a rigorous program, but well worth the time and effort,” Tracy said. “We learned so much about recycling everything from glass to mattresses to stuff you wouldn’t even think could be recycled.”

Tracy, who is also a Master Gardener, decided to participate in the pilot program because she is bothered by the waste she sees on a daily basis.

“I’ve been composting and recycling since 1964; in 2000 I built a three-bin composter in my backyard,” Tracy said. “I do it because there is far too much waste that gets tossed into landfills – it’s disgusting.”

Burkhart, a Bloomington resident for nearly 30 years and mother of two, got involved in the program to learn as much as possible about how recycling and compost programs work. She hopes to inspire others, especially kids.

“I love the notion that we can all be much more conscientious as consumers



Susan Tracy, Lisa Burkhart and Julie Tinberg at the compost bin.

and make a positive impact on the environment,” Burkhart said.

Tinberg’s goal is to create awareness in others and connect with like-minded people to find solutions for recycling barriers. She said there is a definite need for Master Recyclers in the community.

“I think it’s great to have ‘go to’ people in the community to answer questions about composting and recycling issues,” Tinberg said. “I enjoy being one of those people.”

For more information, visit www.hennepin.us, keywords: **Master Recycler Program** or call Environmental Health at 952-563-8934.

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The City offers a variety of online tools to help you stay informed about City news, programs, events and more. For example, you can sign up for Curbside Cleanup updates, *see article at right*, using [E-Subscribe](#).

This free subscription service sends e-mail and wireless notifications when updates to our most popular Web pages are posted.

Are you on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) or [Twitter](#)? The City’s social media pages can also provide you with updates and keep you informed.

For more information, click the icons on the home page of the City’s website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: **SOCIAL MEDIA.**

AT YOUR SERVICE

KEEP BLOOMINGTON
LOOKING GOOD
HAULERS HELP RESIDENTS IN
THEIR SPRING CLEANING EFFORTS

The annual Citywide Curbside Cleanup recycled more than 1,785 discarded appliance units, 62 tons of tree brush, and one-and-a-half tons of unwanted scrap metal. General trash collected during the cleanup amounted to a whopping 1,717 tons.

Residents have been taking advantage of this opportunity to dispose of bulky waste not routinely picked up by weekly hauling services since the Cleanup began in 1963. (The Cleanup was discontinued in the 1980s, but resumed again in 1998.)

“The Curbside Cleanup has always been a great, affordable way to get rid of bulky waste that may be taking up space in your garage, yard or home,” Assistant Maintenance Superintendent Jim Eiler said. “Taking advantage of this program helps keep our city looking clean and ensures that unwanted items are disposed of in a safe manner.”

For an annual fee per single-family home of \$20.28 that appears on utility bills, haulers take unwanted mattresses, furniture, appliances, metal, tree brush, among other things, from the curbs of Bloomington residents during the five-week cleanup.

Unaccepted items, including hazardous materials (paints, motor oil, household chemicals), electronic items and batteries should be taken to the Hennepin County Recycling and Problem Waste Drop-off Center, 1400 West 96th Street.

For more information, contact Jim Eiler at 952-563-8766, or e-mail jeiler@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

